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FROM THE FARM UP AND ON AND ALWAYS

HIS EXCELLENCY

CALVIN COOLIDGE

GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS

*Republican Candidate for
Vice-President of the United States*

HIS FIRST BIOGRAPHY

PUBLISHED BY

THE ROOSEVELT CLUB
(INCORPORATED)

FOR ITS MEMBERS

BOSTON 1920

"SEEST THOU A MAN DILIGENT IN HIS BUSINESS,
HE SHALL STAND BEFORE KINGS"

OMNIA PRAETER STREPITUM ET CLAMOREM

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF CALVIN COOLIDGE

FROM CORNERSTONE TO CAPSTONE
THE A B C

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Robert M. Washburn
Boston, Mass.

Second Edition

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R 782



IN THE EXECUTIVE CHAMBER

Calvin Coolidge, Jr.; Col. John C. Coolidge; John Coolidge; Mrs. Calvin Coolidge

CHAPTER 1.

THE CORNERSTONE.

"Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way"
—Goldsmith



MOTHER OF CALVIN COOLIDGE

"About his cradle all was poor and mean save only the source of all great men, the love of a wonderful woman. When she faded away in his tender years, from her death bed in humble poverty she dowered her son with greatness. There can be no proper observance of a birthday which forgets the mother" — *Lincoln Day Proclamation* — 1919

AN ENDORSEMENT OF CHAPTER 2.

(COPY)

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE.

PUBLICITY DEPARTMENT.

NEW YORK CITY,

July 13, 1920.

THE ROOSEVELT CLUB,
89 State Street, Boston.

DEAR SIRS:—

Senator Harding has brought to my attention your letter to him, under date of July 3rd, with the enclosed tribute to Calvin Coolidge. It is admirable, and will be used in the campaign.

Yours truly,

SCOTT C. BONE, Director.

CHAPTER 2.

THE GOVERNOR.

Massachusetts has probably never seen a man prominent in public life like him. No one thinks of opposing him, and his great strength has come to him, he has not gone to it. He has never been known to make the usual moves towards political preferment. Most men impress one with trying to shape their own political fortunes, he appears indifferent. He has been content to rest his political hopes, if he has had any, on the political duties he has had to perform, however humble. The great reason for his political success is his own personality, which appeals to one not for what it appears to be but for what it is. Unlike most politicians, he does not play a part, he is himself. He talks only when he has something to say, but he listens respectfully whether there is something to hear or not. He has humor. He can make a joke and enjoy a joke but he does not use humor only to make for others amusement or for himself votes. A nod from him upon the street is better than an ebullition from another and even this is unnecessary for he is known to be a democrat. He has come, surely, though slowly. Even in his second year in the House, in 1908, he was then not regarded as a leader because he had not been in political life long enough to be known, and because things went after him and not because he went after things. When he was Chairman of the important Committee on Railroads, he was a chairman who presided; a man who made no unnecessary motions of mouth or of body. He never wrote when he could talk, and he never talked when he could nod. He was never opposed, personally; he has no enemies in the usual sense. Few men have fewer critics. He has had as intelligent and as detailed a knowledge of the bills he had to pass on as any man in the State House. He sees only one side of a question, its merits. He has shown independence as a legislator, and is as quick to stand by the weak when they are right as to

leave power when it is wrong. He has had as little newspaper notice as any man of his prominence. This has been because he has avoided it. His speeches have been unique and strong for their thought and for their epigrammatic brevity. His political strength is largely because the public have been curious to study the personality of the only man of that kind they have seen. The more of the man they studied, the more of a man they found. He has ambition, patience, tenacity, and self-control, qualities which enable one to stand before kings. It is not a common sensation for the electorate to be able to exercise its option in the men they honor, to ask for a man rather than simply to have to take him. As Lieutenant Governor he has been loyal to the Governor to a degree too seldom found among his predecessors. His life has enabled him to know and to understand all sorts of men, for he has been of them. These men made him Governor, for they liked him, for his originality, his modesty, his democracy, and his ability. Most men are content to be honored by the office they seek. He gives a dignity to the many high honors which have seemed naturally to come to him. He is more of an asset to public office than public office is an asset to him. He is a character exceeded by none in interest for study, still incomplete, probably always incomplete. When, pursuant to a fine tradition, in early January, 1919, the cannon upon the Common proclaimed to the people of Massachusetts that the hills of her sister state, Vermont, had given them a chief executive, those who would learn to live knew that merit and fortune sometimes walk hand in hand, and that the Commonwealth had, again, the sort of Governor she ought to have, measuring up to her high ideals. Such a man is Calvin Coolidge.

CHAPTER 3.

[This is an intimate biography. More than this, it is an honest biography, to be recognized by those of his own household, by whom, only, is a man known. "Paint me as I am, every line, every scar."]

LOOKING BACKWARD.

THE FIRST DAYS.

On July 4, 1872, 48 years ago, in the columns of a news sheet, "The Blueberry," which succeeded occasionally in making its appearance in the town of Plymouth, Vt., appeared the laconic entry, "Born, to Victoria J. Moor and John Calvin Coolidge, a man child, John Calvin, Jr." These tidings of great joy did not cause banks to close or business to be tied up, for that was a country of farmers only, and those that read it were tillers of the soil and not seers. However, the little stranger, with a foresight, sound and characteristic, had chosen, as the day of his advent, one which the neighbors were bound to celebrate.

The child, an auburn-haired, smooth-faced babe, with a proboscis somewhat attenuated, was as unique, as he lay in his cradle, as he was to be as a man. He seemed troubled. The atmosphere of ambition enshrouded him. He seemed restless, and anxious for change and for progress. The baubles which divert and stimulate the prosaic young, seemingly, had no charm for him, nor did anything which tender hearts or wise heads could plan. He lay in his new bed and cried, and when he tired of crying, he wept, and then he cried again. All this, apparently, with deliberation, and for a purpose, and as a means to an end. For the first effort of the child, and the man has been always, not to play, but to think.

A mother, solicitous through unselfish love, sat by his side, intent upon bringing him peace; and a father, with the more selfish purpose of sleep. The family physician bent over the crib, with that rural versatility which had familiarized him with the whole gamut of bodily afflictions, from rheumatics to melancholia. Noted psychologists, too, were added to the throng, not alone for the advancement of medical science but with the hope of solving a problem which seemed to baffle all.

These all followed his infant gaze as it swept the plain walls of that Vermont farm house. They watched his eyes as they rested and became riveted upon the only decoration in that room, a portrait of that Great Liberator of the Dutch, of the low lands of Holland, a Count of Nassau, William the Silent. And they gave it to the child.

Then peace came to that household, and to its mother. The father slept. The general practitioner went his way, and the noted specialists returned to the great centers. And the child studied the face and the features of the portrait, and then, placing the end of one of his small fore-fingers upon the mouth of that great prince, and the other upon one of his ears, he, too, was content and happy, and he, too, slept, and peace overwhelmed that small house and that small family.

And those that sat about the child construed the lessons of what they had seen to be:—first, that he, too, would leave the hill country of his birth and live close to his adopted meadow lands along the banks of the Connecticut; second, that he fastened the hopes of the political success that was to be his, upon the determination not to talk but to listen, not upon the power of speech but upon the possibilities of silence. From that hour, he then became, and has since continued, Calvin the Silent.¹

¹AND YET

He has a personality, like his ideal, Abraham Lincoln, unique in American politics.

In the opinion of such men as Judge John C. Hammond, of Northampton, in whose office he studied; and Melvin O. Adams and Alfred Hemenway, of Boston, the latter an uncle of his former law partner, he has a fine legal mind.

A pre-eminent characteristic, is his power of intelligent, condensed, epigrammatic expression.

His followers have a loyalty, expressed, after the nomination, in the words of a young college graduate, that he "was with Coolidge 'till the bench broke."

When he was Chairman of the Committee on Railroads, an Anti-Corporation lawyer having finished his argument, asked him if he could retire. Imperturbably, he replied, "Yes, unless you are willing to remain, to protect the Committee from these railroad lawyers present."

CHAPTER 4.¹

COMING.

"A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,
A banner, with the strange device,
'Excelsior.' "

A story of patience—the story of the pendulum, one tick at a time—the story of the ladder, one round at a time—no jumps.

Born, July 4, 1872, Plymouth, Vermont.

Son of John C. Coolidge and Victoria J. Moor.

Ancestors, settled in Watertown, Mass., 1630.

Victoria J. Moor Coolidge, died 1885.

Carrie G. Brown Coolidge, step-mother, who did much to make Calvin Coolidge, died 1920.

Public Schools, Plymouth, Vt.

Black River Academy, Ludlow, Vt.

St. Johnsbury Academy, Vt.

Amherst College, A. B., 1895. Cum laude. Grove oration.

Senior Year, 1st Prize (open to all colleges), Essay, "Principles, Revolutionary War."

Removed to Northampton, 1895.

Studied law with Hammond & Field, Northampton.

Admitted to Bar, 1897.

Practicing lawyer, at one time, as Coolidge & Hemenway.

City Council, 1899.

City Solicitor, 1900-1901.
Clerk, Courts, Hampshire Co., 1903. (Months.)
State Representative, 1907-1908.
Mayor, 1910-1911.
State Senator, 1912-1915.
President of the Senate, 1914-1915. (Unopposed.)
Lieutenant-Governor, 1916-1918.
Governor, 1919-1920. (By the largest vote, ever, 1919.)
Nominated, Vice-President, June 12, 1920, 9 P. M.
Formal notification at Northampton, July 27, 1920.
Honorary Degrees, LL.D., Amherst, Tufts, Williams 1919; Bates, University of Vermont, Wesleyan, 1920.
Author, "Have Faith in Massachusetts."
Married Miss Grace A. Goodhue, a teacher, in Northampton, of Burlington, Vt., October 4, 1905. Two sons: John, 13 years; Calvin, Jr., 12 years.
His family are members, Edwards Congregational Church.

The Governor has two rooms at the Adams House, Boston. He votes in Northampton, where he has one-half of a double, wooden house, at 21 Massasoit St., where his family generally is. His salary, as Governor, is \$10,000 a year. His house rental is \$32 a month, recently raised from \$30. He lives within his income. His landlord, it is understood, is ready to evict his other tenant for any one who can prove that he has been, is, or will be Vice-President of the United States.

Father:—John C. Coolidge, Plymouth, Vt. Merchant and farmer. Ex-State Senator. Ex-State Representative. Colonel on Staff of Former Gov. W. W. Stickney. His only other child, Abbie, died in 1889, at the age of 13.

Father-in-law:—Andrew I. Goodhue, Burlington, Vt. Steamboat Inspector.

⁽¹⁾This biography is invaluable for reference because of the facts in this Chapter alone.)

CHAPTER 5.

CAPACITY SEIZES OPPORTUNITY.



By "Norman."

"Under the law, I hereby call on all the police of Boston, who have loyally and in a never-to-be-forgotten way remained on duty, to aid me in the performance of my duty, the restoration and maintenance of order in the City of Boston."

The Boston Police Strike September 1919 — His High Tide.

CHAPTER 6.¹

NOMINATED FOR VICE-PRESIDENT.

June 12—1920.

With a spontaneity unexcelled in convention history.

Forty-eight years old less 22 days—one year for each star in the flag.

CHAPTER 7.¹

VICE-PRESIDENT.

March 4—1921-1929.

From President, Massachusetts Senate; to President, U. S. Senate,

First Vice-President, Member of Cabinet, Ex-officio by Courtesy.

CHAPTER 8.¹

PRESIDENT.

March 4—1929-1937.

¹ The length of these chapters is explained by the difficulty of securing more exhaustive material.

CHAPTER 9.
THE WEAK LINKS IN HIS ARMOR.

CHAPTER 10.

THE SECRET.

Uncommon Sense.

Political Philosophy.

“Do the day’s work. If it be to protect the rights of the weak, whoever objects, do it. If it be to help a powerful corporation better to serve the people, whatever the opposition, do that. Expect to be called a stand-patter but don’t be a stand-patter. Expect to be called a demagogue but don’t be a demagogue. Don’t hesitate to be as revolutionary as science. Don’t hesitate to be as reactionary as the multiplication table. Don’t expect to build up the weak by pulling down the strong. Don’t hurry to legislate. Give administration a chance to catch up with legislation.

“We need a broader, firmer, deeper faith in the people—a faith that men desire to do right, that the Commonwealth is founded upon a righteousness which will endure, a reconstructed faith that the final approval of the people is given not to demagogues, slavishly pandering to their selfishness, merchandising with the clamor of the hour, but to statesmen, ministering to their welfare, representing their deep, silent, abiding convictions.

“Statutes must appeal to more than material welfare. Wages won’t satisfy, be they never so large. Nor houses; nor lands; nor coupons, though they fall thick as the leaves of autumn. Man has a spiritual nature. Touch it, and it must respond as the magnet responds to the pole. To that, not to selfishness, let the laws of the Commonwealth appeal. Recognize the immortal worth and dignity of man. Let the laws of Massachusetts proclaim to her humblest citizen, performing the most menial task, the recognition of his manhood, the recognition that all men are peers, the humblest with the

most exalted, the recognition that all work is glorified. Such is the path to equality before the law. Such is the foundation of liberty under the law. Such is the sublime revelation of man's relation to man—Democracy.'’ From First Inaugural Address to Massachusetts Senate.

“I am not a candidate for President. I am Governor of Massachusetts, and I am content to do my only duty, the day's work as such.”

Humor.

“If you are asked, if I am a candidate for the Presidency, tell the truth.”

Modesty.

“I have never been hurt by what I have not said.”

At three o'clock on the afternoon following his first election as Lieutenant-Governor, when most successful candidates were easily congratulated in public places, he was found, alone, in his room at the Adams House, sitting by a window opening into an airshaft.

In these days, the typical candidate, who has reconciled his mind to holding high public office, continues to pursue the voter. He effusively simulates a desire to share his cross. He seeks to locate the strawberry-mark which identifies the long lost brother. As against him, the personality of Calvin Coolidge presents a marked, restful and delicious contrast. He has never forgotten, that, if one would have the respect of others, he must respect himself. He has taught the voter to recognize the value of pursuing what is not pursuing him.

“Although I am Coolidge's friend, and have been for years,” he said, “I did not really understand him, until about a year ago. One day he came in here, and, after sitting where you are for the longest time, he said, out of a clear sky: ‘Do you know, I've never really grown up? It's a hard thing for me to play this game. In polities, one must

meet people, and that's not easy for me.' I expressed astonishment. 'No,' he went on, 'it's been hard for me, all my life. When I was a little fellow, as long ago as I can remember, I would go into a panic if I heard stranger voices in the house. I felt I just couldn't meet the people and shake hands with them. Most of the visitors would sit with mother and father in the kitchen and the hardest thing in the world was to have to go through the kitchen door and give them a greeting. I was almost ten before I realized I couldn't go on, that way. And by fighting hard I used to manage to get through that door. I'm all right with old friends, but every time I meet a stranger I've got to go through the old kitchen-door, back home, and it's not easy.' He was silent for a long time after that. Just sat looking out of the window. Then he went away without another word. He's never mentioned the subject since. Nor have I, but I think I can say I understand Calvin Coolidge now. Does it help to explain him to you?"

Courage, his great qualification. Law and order, his great issue.

(The only literature, of this sort, in political history.)

[copy]

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM.

September 13, 1919.

Mr. Samuel Gompers, President,
American Federation of Labor,
New York City, N. Y.

Under the law the suggestions contained in your telegram are not within the authority of the Governor of Massachusetts but only of the Commissioner of Police of the city of Boston. With the maintenance of discipline in his department I have no authority to interfere. He has decided that the men here abandoned their sworn duty and has accordingly declared their places vacant. I shall support the Commissioner in the execution of law and maintenance of order.

CALVIN COOLIDGE, Governor.

[COPY]

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM.

Sunday, Sept. 14, 1919.

Mr. Samuel Gompers, President,
American Federation of Labor,
New York City, N. Y.

Replying to your telegram. I have already refused to remove the Police Commissioner of Boston. I did not appoint him. He can assume no position which the Courts would uphold except what the people have by the authority of their law vested in him. He speaks only with their voice. The right of the Police of Boston to affiliate has always been questioned, never granted, is now prohibited. The suggestion of President Wilson to Washington does not apply to Boston. There the police have remained on duty. Here the Policemen's Union left their duty, an action which President Wilson characterized as a crime against civilization. Your assertion that the Commissioner was wrong cannot justify the wrong of leaving the City unguarded. That furnished the opportunity, the criminal element furnished the action. *There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, any time.* You ask that the public safety again be placed in the hands of these same policemen while they continue in disobedience to the laws of Massachusetts and in their refusal to obey the orders of the Police Department. Nineteen men have been tried and removed. Others having abandoned their duty their places have under the law been declared vacant in the opinion of the Attorney General. I can suggest no authority outside the Courts to take further action. I wish to join and assist in taking a broad view of every situation. A grave responsibility rests on all of us. You can depend on me to support you in every legal action and sound policy. I am equally determined to defend the sovereignty of Massachusetts and to maintain the authority and jurisdiction over her public officers where it has been placed by the Constitution and Laws of her people.

CALVIN COOLIDGE, Governor.

CHAPTER 11.

THE CAPSTONE.

NOT A TRACTION-REAPER

To several thousand neighbors, at Plymouth, Vt., July 15, 1920:

"Vermont is my birthright. Here, one gets close to nature, in the mountains, in the brooks, the waters of which hurry to the sea; in the lakes, shining like silver in their green setting; fields tilled, not by machinery but by the brain and hand of man. My folks are happy and contented. They belong to themselves, live within their income, and fear no man."

He has never played, boy or man; marbles, base-ball, golf, anything. His only avocations have been the gratification of an almost instinctive philosophical sense with the best books; a love of nature, and walking. Apparently, he has ordered his life wisely.

CALVIN COOLIDGE

PLYMOUTH — NORTHAMPTON — BOSTON — WASHINGTON

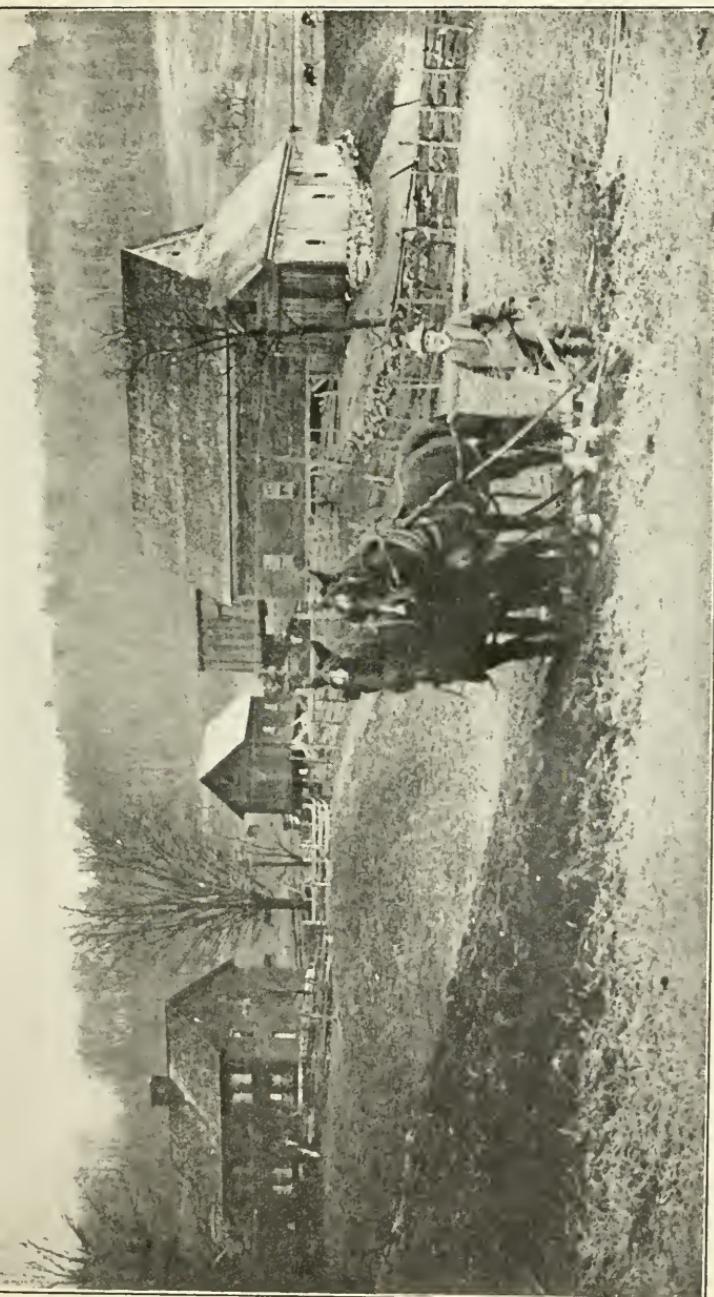
CHARACTER COURAGE EXPERIENCE
CAPACITY OPPORTUNITY ACHIEVEMENT

"Here's to the pilot who weathered the storm."

No man has lived who has not forgotten himself, in the worship of a God, a great man, a good woman, or a big purpose. In this spirit, is this biography written.

This recognition of Calvin Coolidge, all too meagre, yet lives out the spirit of those wise words of his to the Massachusetts Senate, when he was first elected President,

"BE BRIEF."



CALVIN COOLIDGE, ON HIS FATHER'S FARM, 1895

THE LESSON

of this brief biography, for every young American, is, that success comes to a man, not because of what is around him, family or fortune, but because of what is in him; and that there is no end to the path, upwards, when ideals, thrift and courage walk hand in hand.

Edited by
R. M. Washburn
89 State St.,
Boston,
Notification Day
July 27, 1920

THE END

CALVIN COOLIDGE



